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Anonymous Collaboration

Ginny MacKenzie

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Anonymous Collaboration ·
Ginny MacKenzie

He places a handkerchief,
washed of its initials, near
the phone. It's 2 p.m. She'll call—
she's called every day for years.
He's never seen her but
thinks he loves her.
"I'm wearing my satin dress.
Satin." He tries to answer
but she's hung up.
A drop of blood stains
his handkerchief; he's bit
his lip again.

Once when he asked her
to describe herself, she said:
"You preached a good sermon today,
Gipsy Peters . . . Gipsy?
I need to confess."
He's not a preacher but he
could forgive her, could say
come to church or here; but
she hangs up.

If he checks into the hospital—
an amnesiac, wearing the white suit
she sent him, labeled:
For Gipsy Peters on this Special Occasion,
she might come, identify him.
He imagines the steps to his house,
moist heelmarks nearly covered by now.

The door is open. She's read his mail.
A note on the nightstand reads:
"G.P., your only identification is
the past. Go back. Snow is satin
falling on your house." It's 2 p.m.
The phone rings. "Gip-sy?
Gipsy Peters, I've loved you
all my life." He tries to answer
but she's hung up.